

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 CU-02 ERDA-05

ERDE-00 OMB-01 SAM-01 /077 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2826

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

USIA WASHDC

CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 10752

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,UR

SUBJECT: BREZHNEV SPEECH IN HELSINKI--A LACKLUSTER PERFORMANCE

HELSINKI FOR AMBASSADOR STOESEL

USIA FOR IBS,IEE,IPS

CINCUER FOR POLAD

1. BREZHNEV'S HELSINKI SPEECH, AS SEEN HERE ON SOVIET
NATIONAL TV, WAS A LACKLUSTER PERFORMANCE. HIS DELIVERY
WAS LIFELESS AND UNINSPIRING, AND HE HAD MORE THAN THE USUAL
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DIFFICULTY WITH PRONUNCIATION, ON ONE OCCASION MAKING FOUR

DIFFERENT ATTEMPTS TO PRONOUNCE A WORD BEFORE FINALLY SUCCEEDING. (HOWEVER, TELEVISION CAMERAS SHOWED MANY EMPTY CHAIRS IN THE HALL BEFORE BREZHNEV, WITH PEOPLE WALKING UP AND DOWN THE AISLES AND CHATTING WITH EACH OTHER. THIS IS NOT THE TYPE OF ATMOSPHERE BREZHNEV USUALLY ENCOUNTERS WHEN HE IS SPEAKING, AND IT MAY HAVE SOMEWHAT DISCONCERTED HIM.)

2. WITHOUT HAVING YET SEEN A RUSSIAN TEXT, WE SEE NOTHING EVEN REMOTELY SURPRISING IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECH--ALTHOUGH HIS ELEVATION OF PROGRESS IN MBFR TO A FIRST PRIORITY TASK IS CERTAINLY NOTEWORTHY. TACTICALLY, HOWEVER, THE SPEECH CONTAINS SEVERAL FAIRLY INTERESTING POINTS. FIRST BREZHNEV MADE NO MENTION OF THE INVIOABILITY OF BORDERS. HE WAS ALSO CAREFUL TO AVOID TERMINOLOGY WHICH WOULD STATE EXPLICITLY THAT THE SOVIET UNION REGARDED THE CONFERENCE AS A CONFIRMATION OF THE RESULTS OF WW II. HE INSTEAD RESORTED TO USE OF THE CANT RUSSIAN PHRASE "PODVEDENIYE REZUL'TATOV"-- A SUMMING UP OF RESULTS. BOTH APPROACHES WERE PROBABLY UNDERTAKEN TO AVOID FURTHER INFLAMING THE CONTROVERSY OVER CSCE ALREADY ABLAZE IN THE WEST. HIS STRESS ON THE RIGHT OF EACH NATION TO DETERMINE ITS OWN FATE WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM ABROAD MAY HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO CONVEY THAT EVEN BREZHNEV NOW DOES NOT OFFICIALLY AHDERE TO THE "BREZHNEV DOCTRINE." HOWEVER, THIS SAME PASSAGE WAS CERTAINLY INTENDED TO CONVEY THE BASIC MESSAGE THAT WAS SET FORTH BY ANDROPOV IN HIS JUNE 9 ELECTION SPEECH--I.E., CSCE DOES NOT GIVE THE WEST LICENSE TO MEDDLE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION.
MATLOCK

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